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January 27, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Senator
California State Senate, District 28
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection and
Energy
State Senator
California State Senate, District 10
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

Emailed to: SBUD.Committee@senate.ca.gov

Re: Strong Support for Wildfire Recovery Early Budget Action

Dear Senators Skinner and Wieckowski:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), which represents all 58 counties, has been a strong advocate for funding to make California more wildfire resilient. Over the past few years, CSAC has taken the lead on a number of disaster recovery and response efforts as well as proposed changes to land use planning, forest management practices, and emergency notification procedures. We will continue to be the voice of impacted communities in the upcoming budget and legislative session, especially in the areas of wildfire prevention, community protection and disaster recovery.

Since 2019, county government leaders and other stakeholders met regularly with the Administration through the Forest Management Task Force (FMTF) to provide input into the state's Forest Resilience Action Plan. Prior to that CSAC and our member counties were actively engaged in the Governor's Tree Mortality Task, the forerunner to the FMTF. This FMTF plan has been released in conjunction with January budget proposal and includes a \$1 billion, one-time, General Fund investment for forest resilience efforts. **CSAC strongly supports the Governor's proposal to accelerate \$323 million for wildfire and forest resilience.** Not only will this support our local efforts to reduce catastrophic wildfires and restore forests and headwaters, state funding will provide a strong collaborative signal to the federal government as they develop new strategies to improve forests on federal lands.

In addition to much needed, immediate funding for resilient forests and landscapes, fuel breaks and economic stimulus, we are particularly pleased to support these regional and local funding allocations:

- \$50 million for fire prevention grants;
- \$25 million for Regional Forest and Fire Capacity; and,
- \$25 million for home hardening.

Counties are strong partners in our efforts to reduce wildfire risk. With support for regional efforts from state and federal partners, we can make continue to transform communities into resilient and wildfire hardened areas. Thank you for your consideration of our request. If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Freeman, CSAC Legislative Representative at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Catherine Freeman
Legislative Representative

Cc: Members, Senate Budget Committee
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
Keely Bosler, Director, California Department of Finance
Patrick Wright, Interim Director, Governor's Forest Management Task Force
Joe Stephenshaw, Staff Director, California Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Joanne Roy, Consultant, California Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
James Hacker, Consultant, California Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Kirk Feely, Minority Party Fiscal Director, California State Senate
Emilye Reeb, Senate Fiscal Consultant, California State Senate